

*The Biography
of
Karl O. Nielson*

From Florence Nielsen

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X A colleague, Dr. J. H. Carlquist, in an editorial for the Salt Lake Tribune of May 18, 1956, said, "Salt Lake City doctors who attended the funeral of Dr. Karl O. Nielson in Heber Wednesday were inspired and impressed by the community feeling demonstrated over the sudden death of the prominent Wasatch County physician and surgeon. Business establishments closed for the services and the LDS Stakehouse, where the funeral was conducted, was filled to capacity. Many speakers emphasized the meaning to the community of Dr. Nielson's service, and one mentioned that rural doctors, so often overlooked, tend to die at a considerably earlier age than the patients they serve.

X "Statistically true or not, it was true in the case of Dr. Nielson. He died of a heart ailment at the age of 51 in the midst of work last Saturday. There is another side to the rural medical service story, a side demonstrated by the Heber and Wasatch County expression of affection and respect for Dr. Nielson. There can be great satisfaction to the consecrated physician in such small town and rural service. It is a personal service in a way big city practice rarely is. And there is a stature and respect and appreciation in the community which to many dedicated physicians makes up for the financial and other drawbacks of rural medical service."

The Wasatch Wave summed up his life in these words: "He lived big, loved much; and when he left, a whole community took it hard. The tragedy of a man's death is measured by the value of his life; for Dr. Karl Nielson, country doctor, community leader, modest philanthropist and family man, we shall mourn a long time."

The progress of any community is dependent upon men of courage, vision and determination. Men who cannot be satisfied with life as they find it will inevitably make a better life for all, creating values of mind and institutions of service which bring satisfaction to themselves and benefits to their fellow men.

Such a man was Dr. Karl O. Nielson who came to Wasatch Valley as a young physician armed with little more than determination to succeed in his chosen profession. During twenty years of service to citizens of the valley, he remained true to the trust which was his as a doctor; through his compassion for others and his progressive vision, the Nielson Memorial Hospital now stands as irrefutable evidence of his success. This hospital, named in his honor, together with the love and respect of his friends testifies to the realization of his highest ambitions for service.

On a cold, gray morning in May, 1936, young Doctor Nielson and his wife, Florence, entered Heber Valley in the old car they had purchased to take them on their search for a spot where Karl, his internship just behind him, could begin medical practice.

Heber City at this time presented anything but an inspiring picture to the young couple. Few really attractive homes lined the streets, largely graveled lanes punctuated with mud holes and outlined by dirt paths or sidewalks in dire need of repair. After a brief look at the exterior of the little hospital, the young doctor and his wife decided that pastures elsewhere were probably greener and made up their minds to slip quietly away without anyone knowing they had been in town. However, this superficial judgment of the community weighed on Florence's mind. Halfway through Provo Canyon she turned to her husband and said, "Isn't it crazy to come to a town where a medical vacancy exists without even investigating thoroughly?" Making a hasty decision, young Dr. Karl turned his antiquated automobile around and returned to the hospital to inquire into the possibility of beginning his practice among the people of Heber Valley.

A tall thin young man alighted from the old car in front of the hospital. His threadbare suit spoke clearly of

privations and sacrifices; yet as he walked confidently into the hospital he gave the impression of a man who knew where he wanted to go.

Entering the waiting room, he found nearly every seat occupied by a person waiting patiently to see Doctor Thomas A. Dannenberg, the town's very much overworked physician. T. A. was up to his chin, for these were not the only patients waiting for him; a surgery case was being prepared at this very moment.

Gruff, outspoken Doctor T. A. welcomed this young professional aid and the two strong personalities took an immediate shine to each other. Without a word to his wife waiting quietly in the car, Dr. Karl scrubbed up and, even before he had a chance to talk about entering practice under the same roof, aided T. A. in surgery.

While Karl was busy in the small hospital, Florence rested in the car and wondered if she could at last hope for an end to the long years of preparation. Her mind was flooded with memories, both painful and happy, of past years spent working together for this common goal.

Karl had been born the second son of Dr. Alexander John Nielson and Andrea Jessen on December 6, 1904, in Washington, D. C. His father was enrolled in Georgetown University at this time preparing for a career in medicine, meeting all expenses as an interpreter in government bureaus. In addition to family, school and office responsibilities, Karl's father, son of Danish converts to the Mormon Church, served as president of the first L.D.S. branch in Washington.

Fresh from Denmark, he had lived in the home of Doctor Karl G. Maeser, the man who was commissioned to found Brigham Young University in Provo. According to Karl's mother, the great educator had noted in Alexander Nielson and his brother the spark of brilliance and is quoted as saying, "These boys are worth educating even for nothing." His evaluation of their potential and his faith in their ability was proved correct, for both of them became successful doctors, serving their communities and instilling in their own children this same unquenchable thirst for knowledge. In recognition of Doctor Maeser's influence, Karl O. Nielson

W. H. High School as Valedictorian. She graduated from the Brigham Young University with high honors and became a registered laboratory technician. She married Glen I. Hicken in the Salt Lake Temple and has four children. His oldest son, Douglas, graduated from Wasatch High School as Valedictorian and is following in his father's footsteps by preparing for a career in medicine. Richard also demonstrates the drive which made his father a leader. The high standards of character which Karl's life has engendered in his children, and the many friends his life has lifted to higher levels, are the truly lasting memorials to his career.

Karl was a philanthropist at heart and his acts of benevolence were many and varied, extending from a "no charge" notation on the daily hospital record for a patient in financial difficulty to a gift of an organ to his home ward and unsolicited donations toward the construction of many chapels in the area. His love was not limited to human beings, for he truly loved the community in which he had gained professional and financial success and, in his desire to support it, he insisted that everything possible be purchased in local shops. "They pay for my living; why shouldn't I patronize them?" he often said of Wasatch County merchants. He loved beautiful things, especially his greenhouse and the beautiful shrubs and roses he was able to grow around his stately home.

"Big Doc" deplored small-natured men. "He became out of patience with men who were not big enough to see themselves in their own light," says one of his employees, nurse Sina Duke, who worked at his side throughout his twenty years in the community. Undoubtedly a person's motives had to be sincere if Karl were to give his support.

He was a public-spirited man and gave of his time freely in many civic affairs. At the time of his death he was a member and past president of the Heber Lions Club, Wasatch-Summit Knife and Fork Club and the Wasatch Chamber of Commerce. He served on the Wasatch Selective Service Board and was president of Wasatch Mutual Aid Society Insurance Company. Prior to his death he had been elected president of the Utah County Medical Society and would have served the following winter.

Florence, for now they needed each other more than ever before. They traveled extensively, going as far as Mexico, visiting many of the places they had always longed to see.

After returning to Heber from the dedication of the Los Angeles Temple, Karl resumed a limited practice. The few hours he was able to spend in surgery and in his office kept him in contact with work that had been the guiding force of his life, but he was troubled that many of the patients who wanted his advice could not be accommodated.

On May 12, 1956, Karl was called to his office at the request of a patient. Florence, knowing he was tired, intimated to Karl that perhaps it was not essential that he answer this call. The philosophy of his medical career was summed up in the answer she received: "Florence, whenever any patient under my care needs me I'll be there."

That day, in the hospital he had entered twenty years before, his weakened heart gave way under the unceasing drive of his spirit. He suffered a second coronary attack and slipped quietly away while his colleagues, Doctor Willard Draper and Doctor R. Raymond Green, stood helplessly by. Doctor Draper, who had labored closely with Karl for more than ten years, was grief stricken. "I've just lost my father, my brother and my colleague," he said. "We'll make this hospital he has created a memorial to his name. From now on, Heber Hospital will be called the Nielson Memorial Hospital."

As expressed by an editorial in the community's weekly newspaper, The Wasatch Wave, "Under Dr. Nielson, hospital obstetrics became accepted in a community where the family bedroom was also the delivery room. Under him Heber Hospital adopted big-city methods and made use of modern equipment, yet it never lost the warm informality which made it next best to home for patients. Dr. Nielson was continually working, changing, developing, improving; it is characteristic that his memorial be one which be built with his own hands."

But this was not his only memorial. His high ideals: dedicated service, hard work and determination have all been passed on to his children. Carroll Lee graduated from Was-

was given his name by a grateful father.

After completing his education in New York City, Dr. Alexander practiced in Salt Lake City for a short time. It would have been easy to slip into a comfortable city practice, but in June, 1908, he and his wife chose instead to move to the small pioneer community of Ephraim, Utah. A start was all they went there for, according to Andrea Nielson, but they remained to serve its people for over twenty-seven years.

For the three boys, Ken, six years old; Karl, four; and Douglas, one, adjustment to their pioneer life was difficult. Their clothes, just a little fancier than the patched jeans of the hardened pioneer youngsters, classified them immediately as city dudes. A little ingenuity on the part of the boys corrected this situation, however, for they learned to hide their dude clothes in the bushes and wear their old jeans to school, always stopping to change on the way home. Naturally Mother had to surrender to such tactics, and soon they were permitted to wear clothing more acceptable to their peers.

It was in this maturing community that Doctor Karl received his early training. His own unselfishness and compassion for others was undoubtedly the result of the example set for him by his father, whose medical and civic services were never withheld for lack of remuneration.

Even in this pioneer town education was held in high esteem; books and learning were as much a part of the Nielson home as the furniture. Karl took readily to his schoolwork, laying a firm foundation for the years to follow. In work or play, he began to develop characteristics of leadership. He always had many friends and could be found in the very center of progressive projects. His constant desire to succeed led him to challenge his teachers to provide the best and most complete instruction, especially in science and mathematics. He was never content to accept minimum or average standards of accomplishment, and attended two complete summer sessions at the University of Utah prior to his graduation from high school at the age of seventeen.

The establishment of a junior college in Ephraim enabled

him to complete two years of college without leaving home. Later he enrolled in the University of Utah but, with characteristic independence, quit to make his own way as a school teacher in Sevier County.

After a year in this location, he spent the summer working on a railroad section and then accepted a more desirable teaching position at Spring Canyon, Carbon County. Here in the same school a young woman named Florence Tuttle was also teaching, and a romance, born in the schoolhouse, was culminated in the Salt Lake Temple on March 14, 1928, when Karl and Florence were wed.

The depression era followed quickly and brought a ruling that married women could not hold positions in the public schools. With Florence out of a job, the newly married couple decided to cast their lot with the Spring Canyon Coal Company where Karl obtained a good position in the office. Even during depression years, life in the company-owned town, with its dances and congenial citizens, was exciting; but conditions were hardly conducive to economic development. Although the rent of a two-room house was very reasonable, all of the family finances had a way of returning to the company-owned store. Florence sums it up this way: "The old folk-song which goes, 'I owe my soul to the company store' was not very far from the truth."

Experiences in Spring Canyon were not all unhappy, nor were they all without an element of suspense and drama; for the wild and woolly West had provided a modern counterpart for the old stage coach express with its straining, sweating horses pulling the carriage with its proverbial chest of gold, and its armed guard shooting at masked highwaymen. Yes, Karl had played a role in this drama twice each month as he carried a loaded rifle in the front seat of an armored car on its run to Helper, 11 miles away to pick up the company payroll. It wasn't just an act either for past robberies had necessitated this protective action as the valuable car traversed the winding canyon road so ideally arranged for bandits who might desire to get rich the easy way. Florence could remember the feeling of relief she had experienced each time the payroll arrived safely in town.

In these circumstances a baby girl was born to Karl and

would be a long time before the "Snakepit" as this experience came to be called, would be forgotten.

Each summer for several years during the height of his practice he would rent a cottage at Newport, California, and spend about two weeks there surrounded by family. His mother, Andrea, Florence's mother and her sister, his own children including Carroll Lee and her husband, his beloved grandsons — all enjoyed these pleasant vacations with him. During the first week of his vacation, Karl would relax in the changed environment and enjoy deep sea and surf fishing, but the second week found him beginning to think about work he had left at home and the patients whose problems had not been completely solved before his departure. He was always anxious to return to the job by the time their vacation neared its end.

With his friends, Karl enjoyed fishing and hunting whenever he had the opportunity. Each fall the call of the hunt would infect Karl with a restlessness which he couldn't ignore and he always planned an outing in the hills at this time. When his hands began to bother him badly he refused to think they might interfere with his hunting and said, "I'll go out after the buckskin every year as long as my finger will pull the trigger."

On Easter morning, 1953, the entire community was shocked when Karl suffered a very serious heart attack which made him a patient in the hospital he had helped to create. The citizens of Wasatch County suddenly realized how much they had come to rely on him and, like a man awakening from sleep, they rallied to the bedside of this dynamic doctor they had come to love. Slowly but surely Karl had begun to recover from the extensive heart damage he had suffered. In these dark hours his immediate family proved indispensable. His younger brother, Paul, a practicing psychiatrist and a member of the faculty at the University of Chicago came to Heber to give Karl the special psychological help coronary patients require for complete recovery.

Now that the hospital could no longer demand all of his energy and attention, he could devote the greatest portion of his time to his wife, his children and grandchildren. A bond of love and affection was renewed between he and

to put their living trophies of the hunt in the little coupe for the return home. Safely home, the boys wasted little time in dragging out their prized box, but alas, their joy soon turned to startled apprehension as they saw their multicolored snake disappear down a hole in the trunk of the car. All of their ingenuity failed them this time, and reluctantly they reported the terrifying news of a very unwelcome cold-blooded creature lurking in the numerous small hiding places in the family car.

Well, Florence took this startling revelation of the boys with worried dismay, for she was slightly involved in the unexpected crisis by having consented to their selection of playmates, but Karl received the news with an anger born of the horror of all horrors, the thought of a shiny, cold snake crawling down his back at an unexpected moment. The car was rushed into an emergency operation at the service station in an effort to remove this potential menace to life and sanity, but the illusive cause of all the trouble had either pulled a disappearing act, or it had found an opening and departed in all haste. The question in everyone's mind was "Will the mental picture of the slimy snake suddenly crawling out of its lair and down Karl's back become a reality or was he gone for good?" How could they know for sure? Only time would tell.

The next morning Dr. Karl went to work forgetting the snake incident while planning his busy day. As usual he took his medical bag into the nurse to be replenished for the day. He went into his office and called on her to please bring his stethoscope. The instrument is composed mostly of rubber tubing. She quickly moved to comply, putting her hand into the bag. Can you imagine the terrifying realization this poor nurse must have had when the rubber tube she had unseeingly and hastily drawn from the bag suddenly came to life as a wriggling serpent?

All was quickly explained and the nurse's ragged nerves soothed by the compassionate and grateful Dr. Karl. The snake was safely carried home in an escape-proof box and a grim reminder to the boys to find better playmates. Everyone was happy that Karl need no longer feel goose-pimples up and down his spine for fear of the snake; but it

Florence on February 22, 1929. Through a combination of circumstances including inadequate hospital facilities and a company physician who lacked skill in obstetrics, the baby died and Florence became critically ill. In a desperate move to save the life of his lovely young wife, Karl placed an urgent call to his father, Dr. Alexander, who responded as quickly as transportation would allow, for all travel to and from the coal town was by train during the winter months. Under the skilled care of Karl's father, Florence's life was saved and slowly, painfully she inched her way to strength.

At this point let us sum up the problems these two young people were facing. Filled with an inherent determination to keep their life moving ahead, Karl and Florence were carrying the burden of bereavement for the loss of their first child in an area which was beginning to show the first signs of economic illness. Under these conditions they were unable to save any money for the education Karl wanted so desperately.

Still under par physically, Florence was given the opportunity to manage a small confectionery in Spring Canyon. Karl was very much opposed to this venture, but he finally consented and the proposition was to provide means of escape from the economic prison in which they were trapped.

As the impending depression brought the first curtailment of company activity, Karl's immediate supervisor decided to retire. Quick as a flash, Karl made up his mind that they too must make their move or be trapped. That very night he quit his job with the coal company and with their meager savings the young Nielsons moved to Salt Lake City where he could enroll in the University of Utah as a pre-medical student.

Confronted with the necessity of supporting themselves, Karl and Florence rented a house large enough to provide rooming facilities and filled it with an array of second-hand furniture suitable for living and studying. Although the facilities offered were not comparable to those of the Ritz, the friendly quiet atmosphere and tasty food tempted many

students to stay with the Nielsons during their schooling in Salt Lake City. One of their star boarders was the doctor who had been so unsuccessful in caring for Florence during the birth of her first child. Out of his desire to make amends for the trouble they had experienced under his care, he contributed substantial rent money which was very helpful during this important period.

The rooming house venture, once started, was Florence's responsibility; however, Karl brought home his share of the the family bacon too. In spite of the heavy academic load of a pre-medical student, he managed to tend furnace and do other janitorial work in University buildings to pay part of his tuition. During this early part of his medical training, Karl found it necessary to hire special tutors to aid him in making up his deficiencies in chemistry and German. In an atmosphere of economic insecurity, a terrific load of academic work demanded all the courage and determination Karl and Florence had, but they kept plodding steadfastly toward their goal.

The endless routine of work and study was interrupted this year by the safe arrival of a baby girl. Carrol Lee Nielson made her entry into the family on September 21, 1930, and the advent of this child gave additional impetus to their dedication.

On June 6, 1932, Karl donned cap and gown and received his Bachelor Arts degree from the University of Utah. It was a proud moment for Florence as the tall, straight young man of 29 years walked across the platform to receive the diploma they had worked so hard to earn. This accomplishment, contrasted with the discouraging days in the coal town, moved Florence and Karl to secret prayers of thanksgiving for having made the important decision to launch out on the pathway to education.

With two years of Junior College, two years of pre-med and two years of medical training behind him, Karl was now ready for two years of concentrated study at a leading medical college. After careful consideration, he and Florence selected Rush Medical College in Chicago. Karl's application was accepted and they began to make preparations to enter the school the following fall term.

handsome sweaters for himself, Florence and other members of his family.

Although Karl's work kept him busy, he always found time to enjoy his family. Two brothers joined Carroll Lee after her parents had settled in Heber. Douglas, born on July 30, 1940, and Richard born October 7, 1944, were both delivered in the hospital where their father practiced.

Karl had built a home for his family in a prosperous section of the growing community, planning, designing, decorating and landscaping every inch of it himself. Florence, ill with her third pregnancy, watched in gratitude as her husband attended to all the details connected with its construction. At Christmastime, 1940, they moved into the home Karl was to occupy until his death. Here his children grew, and grandchildren romped on the lawn.

Dr. Karl loved to take his family on outings. These usually provided many happy memories of being together, but one such outing ended in near disaster at the time and in the years that followed sparkled the family history with an ironic humor never to be forgotten.

Stinking Springs, a rather bleak and desolate area to put it mildly, was the scene of this little drama we are about to relate. Karl wasn't having enviable success in his angling venture and the boys and their mother were just a little bored with the whole situation too; however, the boys soon found entertainment in the forms of life they found inhabiting the banks of the stream. The first form of life they investigated although offensive to some, was rather harmless, and with their mother's approval, a frog with a friendly looking face, became one of the spoils of their campaign as they stowed him away in a small box, to be the beginning of a new aquarium. They scampered along the stream looking for other game when a large water snake with glittering eyes and tongue slithered across the path. After a very brief moment of hesitation and surprise, the boys ended this not-so-friendly creature's freedom with characteristic boyish bravado and added him to the spoils box. Florence agreed rather reluctantly to their possession of these pets, but realizing that they would soon be turned loose, she allowed them

Soon after Doctor Draper's arrival, X-ray burns began to appear on Karl's hands, and knowing they could lead to cancerous growths if not treated, he and Florence journeyed to St. Louis for repair of his left hand. This was not a simple operation, for much of the injured tissue had to be surgically removed and grafting done to repair the damage. Florence remembers vividly that extreme shock and pain made Karl violently ill following his first operation. Exhibiting characteristic fortitude, he returned three weeks later to his patients. With his bandaged hand tied to his chest, a nurse would scrub the other and he would assist in surgery. It took three more surgical bouts during succeeding years to keep his hands in shape for the work they were trained for.

During the summer and fall of 1948, extensive renovations were carried out under the direction of the two doctors. Utilizing the money his expanding practice was bringing in, Karl improved hospital facilities. A large modern operating room was constructed on the ground floor with an X-ray room directly across the hall. Office space originally scheduled for an E.N.T. specialist to utilize one day each week appeared on the ground floor. Special facilities for E.K.G., BmR were also included on the ground floor as well as other diagnostic and therapeutic instruments. Upstairs were added a new delivery room with adjoining labor room and, across the hall, modern nursery facilities were provided. Two bathrooms, an elevator, a new ward and an outside entrance from the south completed the remodeling. Karl, greeting the public at the official opening on December 26, 1948, was very proud of these new facilities. The small city of Heber now boasted modern medical equipment and services equivalent to big city hospitals, yet also maintained the family atmosphere possible only in a rural area.

In spite of the surgery which had to be done periodically on his hands, Karl carried on the work he loved so sincerely. At no time did it interfere with the care of his patients for, barely out of the hospital, he would return to his office and the people who awaited him. Doctor Robinson had suggested some type of exercise to keep his hands nimble. With Florence's help he learned to knit and out of fine English yarn purchased on a trip to the Northwest, he knit several

That summer found Karl laboring diligently to prepare financially for the year ahead. Now hard physical labor replaced the mental strain of the past winter as Karl obtained employment in the harvesting and processing of peas. He spent endless, back-breaking days of up to twenty hours in the fields until waning summer brought the time when they made final preparations for their journey to Chicago.

Fired with enthusiasm, they arrived in Chicago to enter Rush Medical College. Amid curious and amused glances they alighted from the bus with their household utensils bundled in a blanket and tied with a rope. Florence recalls that this was probably unnecessary but they had followed the advice of friends who told them it would be the most practical way to move. A concealing taxi would have been appreciated, but the money which would have purchased this escape was needed for more essential items, so the young couple was forced to trudge through the streets of Chicago to their hotel. With slightly embarrassed glances to one side and the other, they crossed the seemingly endless expanse of the hotel lobby and obtained a room for their first night in Chicago.

After a good night's rest they began the search for permanent living quarters which would be near enough the college to permit him to walk to and from school. They found their way to an old mansion which had been converted into living quarters where they were greeted by a warm jovial Italian woman called Ma Poletti. The inherent warmth of the young Nielsons struck a sympathetic chord, and they were joyfully welcomed into the Poletti household which was to provide them with physical and emotional comfort for two happy years.

They were often invited by the Polettis to attend native celebrations. With their limited finances and busy schedule they welcomed these relaxing and broadening evenings, for they afforded Karl and Florence an opportunity to know people different from those among whom they had been reared. These experiences led to a lasting friendship which caused the two families to visit each other throughout the remainder of their lives as often as circumstances would

permit.

Whenever possible Florence had always obtained employment to bolster the family finances. Karl had worked in a large department store shortly after coming to Chicago and had gained a reputation for dependability and hard work. When Florence applied to this same store for employment she was accepted ahead of many other depression-year applicants. Her friendly attitude and determination to do the job thoroughly earned her the support of her immediate supervisors. She became so well liked that they gave her the opportunity to work on an hourly basis, thus avoiding NRA regulations as to the number of hours permanent employees could work. On this schedule, she was able to earn more than she could have any other way; in fact, she remembers making more money than the head of her department because she was allowed to work more hours.

When the family treasury grew especially low, Karl would sell his blood for \$25 a pint, and then often had to walk sixteen blocks in order to collect his money on installment.

The activities of the two young people were almost entirely restricted to the immediate surroundings in which they lived and worked. School, employment and recreation were within walking distance of their living quarters and very few shopping or recreational tours were taken into the city proper. When it was necessary to go into the Loop, Karl often put Florence on the bus and walked the twenty-three blocks to meet her at the end of her ride. This hardly indicated a need for exercise on Karl's part; it simply meant they could spare enough money for only one fare. This busy and simple life was far from hard on the young couple, for nearly all of their friends lived simply too, receiving pleasure and satisfaction from their work.

Florence's mother had assumed the responsibility of Carroll Lee, leaving the young couple free to pursue their goal. This separation was very difficult for two people who loved family life so deeply, but they knew a more abundant life would be theirs if they could weather the stormy seas of depression years' schooling.

developed into an interesting part of his life during this time.

The Heber Hospital, where Doctor Nielson practiced during the twenty years he checked the pulse of the area, was originally a home built of stone by Mark Jeffs in 1896. Through the efforts of Doctors Thomas A. and Bert Dannenberg who founded the hospital in 1932, the five rooms boasted central heating and ten beds when Karl arrived. Quarters for a nurse had been built on the south, and a large room directly above served as the operating, delivery and X-Ray room. Within two years after entering practice in Heber, Karl became a member of the firm, taking an active part in its administration.

A major renovation was the removal of the building's two-storied front porches, creating a large reception room on the second floor. The coal stove in the kitchen soon gave way to a modern electric range for preparation of patients' food, and other minor improvements followed constantly.

During this period T. A. and Karl used X-ray equipment with an open bulb for fluoroscopic examinations during which they were exposed to the harmful rays. Unaware of the danger, they incurred considerable damage from X-ray burns and suffered for many years as a direct result.

Karl and T. A. had strong, and often conflicting, ideas about hospital procedure and patient care. Aware that disagreements might lower hospital efficiency, they always ironed out their conflicts with a social gathering at one of their homes so that ill feelings or doubts were never carried to work with them. The wisdom of this method was shown clearly in the success their combined efforts created.

Doctor Dannenberg retired in 1944, and Doctor Eldred Wright of Coalville came to assist Karl in caring for the people of Wasatch County. After his departure to a larger area in 1946 another young doctor, fresh from medical school and internship accepted the opportunity Karl offered and joined the staff. This was Willard Draper who, like Karl, was a man of vision and imbued with an inherent desire to progress. Together these two inaugurated a new era of progress for Heber Hospital.

to-be toward the house when his tall frame failed to negotiate an overhead barbed wire. Cut and bleeding and just a little bit angry from this encounter, he delivered the baby hurriedly and rushed back to the hospital where T.A. could repair the damage with several stitches.

Another time, Karl was called out only to find delivery progressing slowly. Cautioning the family to awaken him when it became necessary, he lay down for a nap. However, after only a little while on the cot they offered, he awoke with a start to find that his body was literally crawling with some form of life. Once again a baby was ushered into the world with considerable haste, and Karl hurried as quickly as possible for home. On this bitterly cold winter night Florence was awakened by a knock on the back door and told to get a robe to cover his nakedness and a towel to cleanse the vermin from his body.

The general upheaval created by the depression resulted in the inauguration of many new governmental programs to bolster the economy and care for its citizens. The Civilian Conservation Corps was organized to enable young men, for whom this period was particularly trying, to find employment in a military-type atmosphere. The construction of Deer Creek Dam brought such an organization to Wasatch County, and medical care was needed for its officers and men.

Dr. Karl O. Nielson served as camp doctor for C.C.C. Number 4792 under the supervision of the Bureau of Reclamation from December, 1937, to April, 1941. During this time he looked after approximately 2000 boys between the ages of 17 and 24. Uprooted from the shelter of their homes and transported many miles to a new environment, these young men required emotional understanding and character guidance as well as medical attention, all of which Karl somehow provided.

He supervised an eight-bed camp infirmary, manned by four medical aids, gave weekly health lectures and conducted first aid classes three times each week. In addition to this busy schedule, he assumed active jurisdiction of all health and sanitation problems in the camp. No problem was too large or too small for his personal attention as the camp

Each day was filled with so much activity that the young couple had little time to worry about their lot in life. Karl's studies took him away to school by 7:00 each morning, and he would not return until 4:00 in the afternoon. Following a light supper he would leave for additional work at the County Hospital or the Presbyterian Hospital. All students were required to spend a specified period of time on call at these hospitals to answer emergency and obstetrical calls. During the lean depression years, people unable to afford medical care found willing help among hospital trainees eager for the experience offered by these destitute families.

The experience of helping such people — many of them negroes living in abject poverty — had a lasting effect on most of the men who experienced with them the joy of birth and the sorrow of death. Karl performed admirably in this service and was given the opportunity to assist in the administration of the program when his period of call duty was over. Florence would often find relaxation from her day's work talking quietly with her husband as he waited in his small office to answer emergency calls and dispatch other medical students to homes of the ill and dying.

Medical training could never lack sparkle for anyone who had earnestly sought it throughout life, as had Karl. With the boundless enthusiasm of youth and the determination born of a desire to succeed, Karl plowed through all the work scheduled for him. All was not routine, however; he had the dubious privilege of riding the hospital ambulance on a history-making run. A notorious Chicago gangster, trailing a path of fear and suffering wherever he passed, had been shot down by one of his kind. This man was John Dillinger, one of America's most wanted criminals, and the ambulance crew could not be certain that the gunmen would not return to make sure they had done a thorough job.

At last the long years of academic and practical study were completed and on Tuesday, March 12, 1935, Karl received the M.D. degree he and Florence had worked so hard for. All that remained was one year of internship before he could be recognized as a qualified physician and begin independent practice. Internships were available in various sections of the country, but the one offered by the

Los Angeles General Hospital seemed to be the most attractive. However, the memory of their life in Utah prompted Karl to return to the Salt Lake County Hospital, simply because he felt Utah offered the best possible advantages for raising his family.

After eight years of university training Doctor Karl O. Nielson now faced a period of fifteen months when he would be required to work long hard hours at the hospital with little remuneration. Florence returned to the home of her parents in Spanish Fork where, to make up for the long separation, she would be able to be with Carroll Lee all of the time. Karl loved his work at the hospital and actually remained there beyond the time required just to benefit from the added experience it offered.

Florence was happy as she sat in the old Chevrolet coupe waiting for the tall young doctor to come out of Heber Hospital. When he returned to the car she asked, "Well, what do you think of this opportunity?"

"I sort of liked what I saw," Karl said. "In fact, I think it deserves further consideration. Doctor Dannenberg has asked me to help in surgery on weekends for a while to get acquainted with the hospital and the people."

Karl and Florence were relieved and happy as they made their way toward Spanish Fork in their old Chevrolet, for the town of Heber would, in all probability, become their home. Here they would be able to raise their family in a semi-rural atmosphere, yet the spiritual and educational heritage which had been their birthright could be passed on to their children. Karl made weekend journeys to Heber City and enjoyed the congenial relationship with Doctor T. A. and the hospital staff for about six weeks. Here he recognized the possibilities for growth and expansion, and therefore made the final move which ended the Nielsons' gypsy existence.

In a modest frame dwelling at 1st West and 3rd South they established their first real home since their marriage. For more than five years, the constantly expanding service of the young doctor radiated from this spot to the entire county and to surrounding areas. Karl was warm and

friendly in all of his dealings with people, yet the first months of his practice presented problems which he had to solve. Like his father, who had been forced to prove the worth of a professionally trained doctor Karl had to convince his patients that he was not too young. Gradually he overcame this feeling, and the people of Wasatch County began to recognize his knowledge and experience.

Karl and Florence were well aware of the sacrifice of privacy his occupation required and of the strange way in which his services would sometimes be sought after, but the following experience tried the good Doc's patience to the very limit and taught them the necessity of guarding the sanctity of their home carefully. During an early spring night when Old Man Winter had relaxed his cold grip and enabled persons who enjoyed a little fresh air to enhance their restful slumber, Karl and Florence had this restful and needed sleep shattered by a man standing uncereemoniously at the foot of their bed, babbling almost incoherently about his need for a doctor. With the adrenaline coursing crazily through his veins as the result of this sudden and frightening awakening, Karl literally flew into his pants and almost booted the unthoughtful person from his unwelcome position at the foot of the bed. My, how his Danish temper lashed out at the poor man as he told him to get out of there and the direction to take toward a warmer spot down below! Yes, he rendered the aid the man had sought without the benefit of adequate warning through doorbell ringing or knocking, and you can bet your last dollar, a front screen door was always locked for a few years after that.

Another attitude that he and his dynamic colleague had to overcome was that the hospital was a place to stay away from except as a last resort. The majority of the babies born in the area at that time were delivered at home rather than in the hospital and the two doctors were forced to spend many nights in patients' homes waiting for nature to decree the time of arrival. Many contests with snowbanks, mud and other natural enemies were fought and won by Karl and T.A. and several are worth mentioning.

On one occasion, Karl was following an anxious father-